

Department of Economic & Community Development
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Department of Economic and Community
Development

M. Jodi Rell

Governor

James Abromaitis

Commissioner

Ronald Angelo

Deputy Commissioner

DECD SMALL CITIES STAFF

Executive Director

Lawrence Lusardi

Administrative Assistant

Marilyn Taylor

Comm. Dev. Specialist

Veronica Hunter

Program Agents

Delores Capers

John Fauxbel

Connie Kozak

Shelley Pille

Bruce Sheridan

LeRoy Smith

DECD receives many questions from clients.

Here are DECD's responses to some frequently asked questions:

Q. Should I notify my program representative if our project experiences problems moving forward?

A. Yes, town repretatives are required to keep DECD up to date on any problems that occur with projects. Many of these problems affect the budget periods and the expenditure of funds. It is DECD's responsibility to assist communities with their grants – but if the department is not informed of issues it can't provide the support needed to help move projects forward. In addition, all project information - good and bad - should be noted on the quarterly reports.

Q. My representative has told me that my files should always remain at the town hall. Is this true?

A. Yes. Project files should always be in the town hall. Many towns have consultants that help with their projects, and in the course of their work, these consultants will need to access information contained in the project file. It is the policy of the department that consultants make copies of the files needed, but that the originals files must always be in the town hall, secured in a file cabinet and available for review.

DECD's Small Cities Quarterly

A Community Development Newsletter from the Department of Economic and Community Development

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IDIS Changes for CDBG

HUD issued major revisions to its Integrated Disbursement and Information System (IDIS) on December 13, 2005. DECD is currently revising its quarterly report forms to collect data in accordance with this revision. Some of the major changes include:

- Accomplishment and beneficiary data must be reported cumulatively by program year (i.e., from 7/1 to 6/30). Beneficiary data (e.g., income and racial/ethnic data) may no longer be reported cumulatively from the start date of the activity.
- The total number of loans and grants that are funded by an activity must be reported. The type (amortized or deferred) and terms (amount, interest rate, and term) of the loans must be reported.
- Beneficiary data (e.g., income and racial/ethnic data) must now be reported differently for housing and non-housing activities. All beneficiary data for housing activities must be reported in households. This data must be reported separately for owners and renters. All beneficiary data for non-housing activities must be reported in persons. Beneficiary incomes must be reported in the following four (4) income ranges for all housing, limited clientele and job creation/retention activities that meet the low and moderate-income national objective:
 - 1) Extremely Low-Income (Income does not exceed 30% of area median income)

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DECD Recognizes Employees for 20 years of Service

DECD held a ceremony on November 29, 2005 to recognize employees that completed 20 years of state service. Pictured here (from left to right) are LeRoy Smith, Connie Kozak, Bruce Sheridan and Delores Capers, all long-time administrators of the Small Cities program.

Congratulations !!



Residential Rehabilitation Forum

DECD hosted a forum on residential rehabilitation. The session was very informative, and included some energizing discussions about different approaches to rehab.

The topics of discussion were as follows:

- Raising the limit for Lead Safe vs Mitigation - \$25,000 seems too low for these projects and in some cases puts the rehab project out of reach
- Most communities indicated they are having a hard time finding contractors. Complying with the Lead Safe requirement is an additional burden
- A need for more Lead Safe training sessions for contractors. It appears that many people that completed the train the trainer courses are not able to conduct trainings as was required
- There is a need for a forum on financial compliance and information on escrow accounts and lump sums
- Requested a 30-day review of the DECD proposed Program Income Plan
- There was a request for specific application documents (i.e. budget forms, quarterly report forms etc. and other Small Cities forms to be put on the DECD web site for easier access
- Problems and issues surrounding public housing and applications
- The need for more environmental training



Affirmative Action Monitoring Underway

A bulletin was recently sent to all towns advising that UCONN was going out to communities to complete the Affirmative Action/Civil Rights monitoring. Please have all your files in order and available for review. If you have any questions contact your program representative.

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- 2) Low-Income (Income exceeds 30%, but does not exceed 50% of area median income)
 - 3) Moderate-Income (Income exceeds 50%, but does not exceed 80% of area median income)
 - 4) Non Low- and Moderate-Income (Income exceeds 80% of area median income)
- Special instructions apply to limited clientele activities where the benefit to low-and moderate-income persons is presumed. In addition, the type and amount of any non-CDBG funding for an activity must be reported. DECD plans to offer training on these and other performance measurement changes as they are released from HUD.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT TRAINING

DECD hosted an Economic Development training session on February 16, 2006 at Rensselaer in Hartford. The training was conducted by Peg Barringer of OKM Associates.

The training was well-attended and Peg's interactive training session included a handbook that gave examples of documents and ways to determine project eligibility. The handbook is a great tool for those towns that plan to do projects in the future. If you did not attend the training and would like a handbook please let your program representative know.

Groundbreakings and Dedications



Town of Durham
Groundbreaking for the Town Hall ADA project
\$750,000
Program Representative: Bruce Sheridan



Town of Ledyard
Avery Hill Drainage Improvements
\$500,000
Program Representative: Bruce Sheridan



Town of Plymouth
Ribbon Cutting for Elderly Housing Project
\$ 500,000
Program Representative: Delores Capers



Town of East Haddam
Senior Center Project
\$325,000
Program Representative: John Fauxbel



Town of Portland
Senior Center ADA project
\$500,000
Program Representative: Bruce Sheridan

NEED TRAINING?

If there is a training area that you would like the Department to address, please let Veronica Hunter know so that the department can organize what you need. She can be reached at 860-270-8236.